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THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA

10 Harry Gelman

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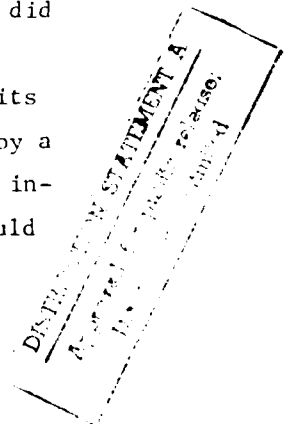
THE SOVIET UNION AND CHINA*

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the close of 1979 set in motion a readjustment of the world's political alignments which is likely to have far-reaching ultimate consequences in many spheres, and not least in the Soviet geopolitical competition with Beijing. The effects of this event upon the Sino-Soviet conflict may be particularly important because they came at the culmination of a transitional year in this relationship, a time of testing. The discussion that follows seeks to explore Sino-Soviet interaction in this transitional period, to examine the motives and behavior of the two antagonists as they have reacted to evolving circumstances prior to the Afghan watershed, and on this basis to assess the possible effects of Afghanistan upon the future of the Sino-Soviet relationship.

In the spring of 1979, against a background of profound ongoing changes in China and even more dramatic recent transformation of the international environment in which the two powers contend, a symbolic milestone was reached. It was at this point that the Chinese announced intention to abrogate the long-dormant 1950 Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty--and simultaneously proposed talks with the Soviets about the fundamental issues of the relationship. The events of the next few years now seemed likely to provide testimony as to the scope and momentum the conflict had acquired after two decades. In the absence of the vanished dominant personalities--Mao and Khrushchev--who gave it initial impetus, how far were both sides constrained by mutual perception of fundamentally irreconcilable national interests? How far could either side carry an effort to reduce tensions without, in fact, injuring what it regarded as a vital national interest? How far did each side now mean to try?

These questions lead to others. As the Brezhnev era nears its close, Soviet policy toward China continues to be characterized by a striking dichotomy of purpose, an internal contradiction of aims inherited from the Khrushchev era. On the one hand the Soviets would

* Final draft of a chapter for a compendium on Soviet Policy in Asia, to be published by the Council on Foreign Relations.



like to do everything possible to weaken, subdue, or isolate the Chinese; on the other hand they would like to reduce Chinese hostility.

We shall see below that for the better part of two decades, at the same time that the Soviet Union has been maintaining growing pressure against external Chinese interests in an incessant struggle around the world and close to home, the Soviets have been the *demon lover* in repeated efforts to get the Chinese to respond to proposals to improve diverse aspects of bilateral relations--in effect, to agree to divorce the bilateral relationship from all other considerations, including all the effects on China of Soviet behavior elsewhere. Neither element in the Soviet posture--the unrelenting competitive pressure and the unabashed effort to improve selected aspects of bilateral dealings--is likely to be abandoned by Brezhnev's heirs, for it is clear that this has been a very characteristic line of Soviet policy, practiced toward some other powers with some success. What have been the impediments to Chinese acquiescence to this in the past, and is the Chinese attitude likely to change?

I

THE THREE CHINESE WALLS

In broadest terms, any Soviet hopes to build an improved relationship with the Chinese leadership must confront three fundamental barriers in the minds of the Chinese. These three concentric walls around the Forbidden City will be considered in order of increasing importance.

The Vanishing "Ideological Dispute"

The first and by far the *least* important today is the ideological dimension--the line of distinction Mao had sought to draw as a matter of principle between China and the Soviet Union in addition to all conflicts of national interest. This area of differences includes, for example, Mao's long-standing charges that the USSR is in the hands of "fascist" renegades who have restored capitalism, that certain Soviet practices such as the use of material incentives are anathema,

and that the Khrushchev and Brezhnev leaderships have betrayed an allegedly consistent and ideologically pure set of past Soviet domestic and foreign policies identified with Stalin.

Today, however, by far the most important and frequent Chinese charges against the Soviet Union center on assertions that the USSR is a "social-imperialist" power which everywhere practices "hegemonism" and "expansionism"--assertions that flow from perceptions of concrete national interest rather than ideological dogma. These charges relate directly to China's primary concerns, that is, its foreign policy concerns.

For the rest, the bulk of the Maoist rhetoric which seemed so important two decades ago has been blown away by the winds of time, by changing Chinese foreign policy needs and leadership personnel. Whatever it may have been expedient to say during Mao's lifetime, it is unlikely that men such as the late Premier Chou Enlai, Chairman Hua, or Vice Premier Teng have genuinely believed that the Soviet Union is led by capitalist renegades or have felt pious horror at the Soviet practice of material incentives. This is particularly evident in view of the pragmatic policies that have been implemented in China in connection with the "Four Modernizations," but there was ample evidence long before. In addition, all Chinese leaders will in any case have noticed that certain of the gravest Chinese ideological charges leveled at the Soviets in the early 1960s--such as the accusations that Marxism-Leninism would be betrayed if one sought improved relations with the United States or showed undue respect for the strength of the U.S. "paper tiger"--have disappeared in the last decade as discordant with present Chinese foreign policy. These dicta have now been revealed to be not eternal truths, as originally described, but ephemeral reflections of momentary and long-vanished Chinese needs. Similarly, the attacks on Yugoslav "revisionism" as a surrogate for Khrushchev in the late 1950s and early 1960s have been followed, in the late 1970s, by a restoration of party relations with Belgrade and even renewed indications of some Chinese interest in Yugoslav economic practice.¹

In sum, it is conceivable that some "ultra-leftist" members of the "Gang of Four" purged immediately after Mao's death, notably the propaganda specialist Yao Wenyuan, might, had they survived, been confirmed as the Maoist fundamentalists they had often seemed in the past (although even this is by no means a foregone conclusion). It is possible that such men might have sought to orient Chinese policy along consistently ideological lines. But it is clear that this view, to the degree it has existed among Mao's heirs, has been highly exceptional, and that a broad spectrum of the Chinese leadership will weigh future policy toward the Soviet Union largely according to their perceptions of hard-and-fast Chinese national interests. They will be variously influenced by the two other factors described below.

The Memory of the Past

The second factor is the collective memory of all that the Soviet Union has done to China in the past--in terms of fading benefits and more vivid injuries. A highly selective list of the latter would include the 1958 Soviet demand for what the Chinese regard as Soviet extraterritorial rights;² the 1959 final refusal to give China the atomic weapon;³ the devastating mammoth withdrawal of the Soviet economic experts in 1960; the movement of large Soviet forces to the Chinese border to intimidate China since the middle 1960s; and the use of some of these forces to defeat and humiliate China at Damansky (Zhenbao) island in 1969. Added to this are innumerable smaller examples of what the Chinese regard as past Soviet efforts to bully China, and what are remembered as Soviet betrayals of Chinese national interests to other countries in many specified incidents--for example, in the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1958 and in dealing with India in 1959-1960.

All of these events will be resented by the great majority of Chinese who remember them. They will merge with older resentments over matters such as the Comintern's mismanagement of the Chinese revolution in the 1920s and 1930s, the Soviet Army's despoiling of Manchuria after World War II, and Stalin's extraction of extraterritorial concessions from Mao in 1950. And finally, these generally-shared grievances will be augmented by many other past offenses which

some present Chinese leaders will resent more than others, such as the Soviet attempts over the years to interfere in the Chinese Party.

While all this will almost certainly have an important impact on Chinese behavior for a long time, it nevertheless is unlikely to be enough, in the future, to maintain Chinese antipathy for the Soviet Union at past intensity unless the past grievances are reinforced by fresh ones. In every country, it is almost impossible to transmit fully emotions based on personal experience to succeeding generations.⁴ As time goes on, it is possible that younger Chinese leaders who did not share leadership responsibility when the Soviets committed most of the acts enumerated above will increasingly tend to regard the record of those acts as a litany to be dutifully learned rather than as a spontaneous source of personal commitment against the USSR. Only personal involvement in combatting what are seen as continuing Soviet acts of enmity against China is likely to keep hostility rekindled.

The Ongoing Geopolitical Struggle

The third and by far the most important factor making for continued Chinese hostility toward the Soviets is the Chinese sense of being forced to confront and respond to an ongoing, long-term Soviet effort to "encircle" them in the world and in Asia, in the first place politically but to some extent militarily. The genesis and evolution of this geopolitical struggle is worth examining in some detail.

Over the last decade, the central reality of Chinese foreign policy has been Beijing's efforts to reach out into the world--particularly the bourgeois world--to build political bulwarks against the Soviet Union and constraints against the expansion of Soviet influence. This focus was imparted to Chinese policy in the first instance by the traumatic cumulative effects of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the clashes on the Soviet border a year later. By dramatizing the USSR as a concrete threat to China, these events enabled Chou Enlai to persuade Mao that China's self-isolation enforced during the Cultural Revolution had become a dangerous liability. As time went on, this impulse to action imparted to China by the sense of a specific military threat from the Soviet Union was

increasingly supplemented--although not supplanted--by a sense of the Soviets as a broader geopolitical threat to Chinese interests.⁵ This was the view, increasingly heard from Beijing as the 1970s progressed, that the Soviet Union had become the one aggressively expansive great power, a "social-imperialist" force intent upon incrementally widening its political and military influence and presence everywhere in the world in "hegemonistic" fashion.

As we recall, under Chou's guidance China accordingly responded by re-emerging into the world as a vigorous diplomatic competitor of the Soviet Union in the early 1970s, much to the chagrin of the Soviets, who had become accustomed to an absence of such competition during the Cultural Revolution.⁶ "Chairman Mao's revolutionary diplomacy" became a standard Chinese code-term for the process of normalization of relations with the United States and Japan, multiplication of dealings with Western Europe, and professed identification with Third World interests and cultivation of Third World governments. One common feature of all this activity was the effort to remind diverse audiences of their conflicts of interest with the Soviet Union and to persuade them to increase their resistance to what was portrayed as the advancing Soviet tide. In dealings with the West, this was summed up by the Chinese thesis that the Soviets were "feinting in the East" (i.e., toward China) while preparing to attack in the West.⁷

Against this background, since the death of Mao in September 1976 the Soviets have seen his heirs continue and significantly enlarge the scope of Chou's diplomatic counteroffensive against them. In the four post-Mao years, Chinese economic engagement with the West has radically expanded, proselytizing visits abroad by Chinese leaders have gradually multiplied, and the Chinese have steadily expanded their use of the United Nations and other multilateral forums to combat aspects of Soviet policy. Throughout this period Chinese representatives have conducted protracted conversations with a number of West European countries about possible arms purchases, evoking vehement Soviet protests including, in 1978, a series of vaguely threatening letters from Brezhnev to the West Europeans. In the same period the Chinese have at last made some tentative efforts to improve their

frozen relations with India, and thus to begin to try to reduce the large advantage Moscow has long held vis-a-vis Beijing in the relationship with New Delhi. To this end, Sino-Indian trade was resumed in 1977 after a fifteen-year hiatus, and the Indian Foreign Minister held exploratory but inconclusive talks on the Sino-Indian border dispute in Beijing in February 1979. Finally, as already noted, the Chinese, who some two decades earlier had used President Tito of Yugoslavia as the symbolic arch-villain and proxy target in their initial attacks on Khrushchev, now came full circle under the influence of the new struggle against Soviet "hegemony." In August 1977 they gave a tumultuous welcome to Tito on his initial visit to China, hailing his vigilant defense of Yugoslav sovereignty and laying the groundwork for both the restoration of Sino-Yugoslav party relations and the return visit by Chairman Hua a year later. In these and a number of other steps the Chinese showed an increased tactical flexibility deriving from the removal of the constraints previously imposed by the presence in the Chinese leadership of the more dogmatic and ideologically-oriented "Gang of Four," as well as by Chairman Mao himself.

The most significant Chinese gains, however, occurred in the five-month period between August and December 1978, when in startling succession they achieved conclusion of a Sino-Japanese Friendship Treaty with anti-Soviet overtones the USSR had long resisted, asserted their political presence in Eastern Europe with a demonstrative and spectacular visit by Chairman Hua to Romania and Yugoslavia, and announced agreement on normalization of relations with the United States. In each succeeding case, the Soviets registered a cumulative resentment.

The signing of the Japanese Treaty was particularly noteworthy in that it was an event the Soviets had explicitly and publicly sought to prevent. The achievement of diplomatic relations with Japan by Chou in 1972 had opened six years of intense diplomatic struggle over terms of a Sino-Japanese Peace and Friendship Treaty, focusing on Chinese insistence on inclusion of an "anti-hegemony" clause which was tacitly identified by all concerned as referring to the USSR. The Soviets had themselves helped make any pretense that this was

not the case impossible by registering several formal and well-publicized demarches to Japan over the years, warning that acceptance of this clause under any guise would have adverse effect on Soviet-Japanese relations.⁸ Moscow thus in effect had made this symbolic issue a public test of the relative influence of China and the USSR upon Japan.

The eventual Soviet failure in the contest they had thus defined is likely to have reinforced the Soviet perception of the weakness of their relative position in Japan. Despite the importance of their own economic dealings with Tokyo, the Soviets continue to display anxiety over the implications of long-term Japanese industrial and technological cooperation with China, and to complain bitterly about such symbolic events as the frequent visits of retired senior officers of the Japanese National Defense Agency to China.⁹ The difficulties the Soviet experience in competing with China in Japan are of course exacerbated by their obstinate refusal to discuss the Japanese claim to the southern Kuriles, a claim which has been vigorously supported by the Chinese since 1964. It is conceivable that this Soviet posture is influenced at least in part by concern over the precedent that concessions the Japanese might set for China's own frontier claims. At the same time, the Soviets have persisted in an ongoing military build-up in the Far East generally, and on the lost islands of Etorofu and Kunashiri specifically, which continues to evoke further Japanese concerns and resentments which are amplified by Beijing.¹⁰

II

SOVIET PRESSURES AND ADVANCES

But despite these 1978 achievements--which the Third Plenum of the Eleventh CCP Central Committee at the end of the year termed "important successes" in developing the "international united front against hegemonism"¹¹--the Chinese continued to convey a sense of being on the defensive overall, against an adversary which despite specific setbacks was continuing to press forward at many points on the world scene.

In the first place, in Europe and the West generally, the Chinese perceive the USSR as having redoubled efforts to constrain the scope, and even more the nature, of Western ties to China. The central thread of the unending Soviet diplomatic and propaganda campaign has been the attempt to remind capitalist industrial states that their economic and security relationships with the USSR are more important than their existing and prospective relationships with China, and to suggest that the former should hence inhibit the latter. The Chinese reaction has sometimes suggested concern that these efforts may not prove entirely without effect.¹²

Meanwhile, there is little doubt that the Chinese have remained impressed and deeply disturbed by the spectacular growth of the Soviet-Cuban military role and Soviet political influence in Africa since 1975. As a byproduct of the leapfrogging Soviet efforts to improve their position in Africa and weaken that of the West through participation in and assistance to selected armed struggles, they have also tended to diminish Chinese influence in many cases, because of Chinese inability to compete on the new scale. While Africa is surely not a vital Chinese interest, Beijing sees alarming significance in this evidence of expanding Soviet capabilities for military intervention in the Third World.¹³ Moscow's demonstration of discovery of a new formula for more distant intervention--combining large-scale use of Soviet logistical support capabilities, Soviet combat supervisors, and thousands of Cuban combat soldiers--has done much to reinforce the Chinese perception that the USSR has assumed what Beijing terms "an offensive posture" on the world scene.¹⁴

This perception is also fed by what the Chinese see as other symptoms of the incremental growth of the Soviet political and military presence in the Third World. The Chinese have repeatedly pointed, in particular, to the 1978 coups staged by strongly pro-Soviet forces in Aden and Kabul as having significantly improved pre-existing Soviet footholds of influence in the Arabian peninsula/Red Sea area on the one hand, and in South Asia on the other. While it is unclear how far the Chinese believe their unsupported assertions that the Soviets were responsible for both coups,¹⁵ they undoubtedly do take for granted

that the Soviets will seek to build on these advances in each area to the extent that admittedly complex local circumstances permit. And while the Chinese ardently welcomed the difficulties the Soviets encountered as a result of the civil war in Afghanistan, the PRC continued, long prior to the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan, to speak of Soviet intentions "to try to consolidate its acquired position . . . and to prepare to push further forward" to the southward so as to "acquire an exit to the Indian Ocean."¹⁶

However, it is the Soviet recent accomplishments in Indochina which are probably the most disturbing to Beijing. From the Chinese perspective, in the wake of the U.S. departure from the peninsula in 1975 the Soviets have successfully sought to exploit for Soviet benefit Vietnamese conflicts of interest with China which had been submerged while the United States was present but which surfaced increasingly thereafter. While the roots of this Vietnamese-Chinese friction were many and some were of long standing, the most important proximate causes were the Vietnamese confrontation with a Cambodian regime allied to China and the Vietnamese resolve to bring in the Soviet Union as a countervailing force to neutralize China and thus enable Hanoi to have its way in Indochina. The Soviets have in consequence been able to harness to their own interests the Vietnamese ambition to dominate the entire peninsula, and in return for indispensable services to an increasingly isolated SRV have obtained unprecedented local political and military advantages.

Two landmarks stand out in this process. The first was the SRV's entry into CEMA in June 1978, a formal avowal of economic alignment with the Soviet Union which followed three years of increasing tilt toward Soviet political positions and increasing frigidity in Sino-Vietnamese relations.¹⁷ The second was the signing of the Vietnamese-Soviet treaty of Peace and Friendship in November. In retrospect, there appears little doubt that this document was intended by the Vietnamese as an instrument of deterrence which would prepare the way for Hanoi to settle its Pol Pot problem once and for all.

That is, this treaty set the stage for the Vietnamese blitzkrieg into Cambodia which began in late December. It appears unlikely under the circumstances that the Soviets were surprised by this event, although both Hanoi and Moscow may have been surprised at the subsequent Cambodian and Chinese response. In the aftermath, the emergence of prolonged Cambodian resistance to Vietnamese occupation, the intransigent Chinese reaction reflected in the PRC's February 1979 unsuccessful military effort to "teach Vietnam a lesson," the opening of what seem likely to prove fruitless and endless Sino-Vietnamese negotiations, and the acceleration of Vietnamese efforts to expel its ethnic Chinese minority have cumulatively created a situation of ongoing uncertainty, tensions and risk for all concerned, including the partners of the November 1978 pact.

Nevertheless, for the time being a geopolitical shift has occurred in the Far East which seems mainly if not entirely to the detriment of China.¹⁸ It is true that Beijing is likely to be gratified at the negative reaction of ASEAN and many other states to Vietnamese and Soviet behavior. On the other hand, this is likely to be considerably outweighed in Chinese eyes by Beijing's inability to halt the SRV's effort to consolidate its hold on Indochina with Soviet assistance, by the fact that China for the indefinite future must now be concerned with two hostile frontiers,¹⁹ and by the spectacle of Soviet warships at last in Cam Ranh Bay, as so long publicly predicted and feared by the Chinese. In sum, there can hardly be a doubt that the PRC sees Soviet policy in Indochina as a genuine and irreconcilable challenge to Chinese national interests.

The Soviet-Cuban combination in Africa and the Soviet-Vietnamese efforts in Indochina thus form a continuum in the Chinese mind. Besides reinforcing the image of broad Soviet outward pressure, these phenomena exacerbate Chinese concern about the growth of the influence of such Soviet proxies in the Non-Aligned Movement.²⁰ At the same time, the Chinese profess concern that Vietnamese success with Soviet help in building a formal or tacit Indochinese Federation may assist the USSR in reviving the notion of an Asian Security system--which the

Chinese continue to regard as a transparent vehicle for legitimizing a Soviet relationship with the PRC's neighbors to the detriment of Chinese influence.²¹

Finally, there is an additional factor that adds substance and endurance to all such Chinese worries about Soviet competitive activities in Asia and the Far East, and makes it difficult for any Chinese government to contemplate a degree of "normalization" with Moscow which might imply acceptance of the legitimacy of those activities. This is the simple fact that the Soviet Union has a permanent territorial presence in the area. Whatever Asian setbacks the USSR might conceivably suffer in the future, the Chinese can never look forward to a time, however distant, when the Soviet competitor might depart. On the contrary, over the years, the economic and geopolitical weight in Asia of eastern Siberia and the Soviet Far East can only be expected to grow with continued high-priority investment, the completion of the construction of the second Siberian rail line, and the further strengthening of Soviet forces along the Chinese border. The Chinese must also expect that the continued deployment of additional Soviet naval units to Vladivostok and the Far East will also be a permanent, long-term phenomenon, responding to the increasing economic importance of the area, the progress of Soviet naval building programs, and perhaps most important, the increasing use of the Far East fleet as one of the sources of support for Soviet political ambitions in Asia. This final consideration has now been given fresh point by the movements of Soviet naval forces to the South China Sea during and since the Sino-Vietnamese fighting of February 1979.²²

III

THE TWO MAIN BILATERAL ISSUES

Against this background of contention across a broad geographical canvas, two issues stand out as the most serious tests of effects of the external contest upon the bilateral relationship. One is the border question; the other is the nature of economic interaction between Moscow and Beijing. How far has improvement been inhibited in each of these areas to date, and why?

The Border

The impasse here is at one and the same time the leading symbol, central issue, and prime hostage of the frozen relationship. The border question has evolved above all as an instrument of Chinese political warfare against the Soviet Union whose increasing use by Mao and his heirs since 1963-1964 has reflected the growth of the underlying hostility. At the same time, it has over the years achieved a life of its own as an important additional stimulus and independent guarantor of that mutual hostility.

In the eyes of the Chinese, the border problem involves a set of specific distant and recent inequities perpetrated upon China by Russia and the USSR which could be glossed over in the case of a friend, but which cannot properly or safely be evaded in dealings with the prime antagonist. These border grievances, surfaced by the Chinese in 1963 and articulated at length since 1969, have by now become inextricably bound up in Chinese perception of the USSR as an implacable menace to a broad spectrum of Chinese interests. The Chinese, therefore, appear to have felt over the years that it would be inappropriate and unwise to let go of this issue except upon terms which would constitute Soviet acceptance of a major defeat on what they have regarded as a central front in a much broader struggle.

The Soviets, for their part, have evidently seen the Chinese as insisting on specific prerequisites for a border settlement which, in the Soviet view, the Chinese must know are incompatible with vital Soviet national interests and which no Soviet leadership can ever grant.²³

This Soviet sense of the Chinese attitude has evidently in turn had operational significance for Soviet economic and military choices which impinge on the Chinese. Despite Soviet overwhelming military superiority and the caution the Chinese have apparently displayed at the border since 1969, the impasse appears to have fed Soviet concerns about the long-term vulnerability of their thinly-populated position in eastern Siberia and the Far East. This in turn appears on the one hand to have been at least a factor in Soviet decisions

about very large economic and strategic investments in the Far East such as the Second Trans-Siberian Railroad (BAM), and on the other hand has impelled Moscow to continue to build up the already sizable Soviet land and naval combat forces adjacent to China.

The Chinese, in their turn, have long perceived these very large Soviet forces stationed along the border and in Mongolia as intended, among other things, to influence the Chinese negotiating position through coercion. In February 1978, Hua Guofeng formalized an earlier Chinese demand that the Soviets reduce their forces confronting China in Asia to the level of the early 1960s, as one of the prerequisites to any general improvement in the relationship.²⁴ To the Soviets under present circumstances, however, this is apparently out of the question.

The Preliminary Withdrawal

The scope of the Soviet dilemma can best be appreciated in a detailed review of the points at issue in the border negotiations.

First, the Chinese have long made it clear that the demand Hua enunciated in February 1978 for a general withdrawal of Soviet forces from the Chinese border and Mongolia was not part of the Chinese position in the border negotiations, but rather an additional general requirement for improvement of the relationship, superimposed on the requirement that a satisfactory border settlement be achieved.

Secondly, it is equally clear from many Chinese statements that while the Chinese identify huge tracts of Soviet territory in the Far East which the Chinese say were unfairly taken from China by Czarist Russia in treaties of the 19th and early 20th centuries which the Chinese term "unequal," the Chinese make no claim to any of this territory. The Chinese do, however, require that the Soviets formally acknowledge that the treaties in question were in fact "unequal,"²⁵ and this may be a major sticking-point for the Soviets. It is probably not, however, the gravest problem.

The heart of the matter appears to be the Chinese contention that Czarist Russia and the Soviet Union have at various times occupied and the USSR continues to hold certain additional Chinese territory not

granted to Russia even by the "unequal" treaties. In practice, this appears to be primarily two areas: one in the west, a tract of some 20,000 square kilometers in the Pamirs, in Soviet Central Asia near the trijunction with Afghanistan; the other in the east, consisting of several hundred islands in the Ussuri and Amur border rivers. This is the territory which China describes as being "in dispute."²⁶ The Chinese demand that as a prerequisite to joint demarcation of an agreed border, both sides must first withdraw all forces from all the territory thus identified as in dispute. Since all such territory is in fact in the hands of the Soviet Union, this amounts, as the Soviets repeatedly complain, to a demand for a unilateral prior Soviet military evacuation of all the areas and places that the Chinese claim, before concrete negotiations can begin. Soviet and Chinese press accounts both make it clear that since the day the Sino-Soviet border talks began in Beijing in October 1969, the talks have been stalemated essentially on this preliminary question.²⁷

The Soviets have been at particular pains to make it clear that they will never abandon, even momentarily, the large pair of islands at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri which the Chinese together call Hei Xiazhi, and which the Soviets call Tamarov and Bolshoy Ussurisk. As Neville Maxwell has pointed out, the Chinese claim that these islands lie on the Chinese side of the *thalweg*, the deepest portion of the main river channel, and hence should rightfully belong to China.²⁸ But whatever the legal case, the Soviets have possession. As the Soviet press has pointedly noted, these islands lie immediately adjacent to the large city of Khabarovsk, through which passes the Trans-Siberian railroad and which proved vital to the defense of the city against the Japanese in the 1930s, when "the sacred blood of Soviet people" was "many times shed on the islands." The Soviets therefore describe them publicly as the "suburbs" of Khabarovsk, and supply elaborate detail on their plans for economic investment there.²⁹ Thus the message conveyed is that the inclusion of Hei Xiazhi in the list of disputed areas which must all be evacuated prior to demarcation of the border is, as the Soviets see it, evidence of the intransigence of the Chinese position and a guarantee of continued stalemate.³⁰

The Non-Use-of-Force Issue

As a substitute for the preliminary pullback the Chinese have been requesting, and as a response to the Chinese accusation that the Soviets in refusing to move their troops were seeking to negotiate behind an implicit threat to use force, the Soviets have repeatedly sought to get the Chinese to settle for a paper pledge of mutual good behavior. This took the form of an offer of a separate non-use-of-force agreement in 1971, and a proposal of a separate non-aggression pact in 1973.³¹ In 1974, these were publicized to demonstrate the pacific nature of Soviet intentions and the contrary about the Chinese, and then were mentioned in the Soviet annual anniversary message to the PRC in October. The Chinese riposte was to insert into their anniversary message to the USSR in November a proposal for a non-aggression and non-use-of-force clause as an integral part of a preliminary agreement for the maintenance of the border status quo which would also include a mutual troop pullback from disputed areas. This was misunderstood in some quarters in the West as evidence that the two sides were drawing closer together, much to the annoyance of both protagonists.

In fact, as Chou Enlai made publicly clear thereafter, the Chinese had no interest in the Soviet "profuse talk about empty treaties on the non-use of force," and were only interested in concrete agreement on the troop pullback (although they would accept an empty pledge along with the pullback).³² Meanwhile, in private dealings with the USSR, according to the Soviets, the Chinese had cited the 1950 Sino-Soviet treaty as rendering the new document proposed by the Soviets superfluous. On the other hand, as the Soviets tell it, when the USSR then asked the PRC to reaffirm the continued validity of this treaty, the Chinese declined.³³ Another page in this story was turned in April 1979, when the Chinese finally announced formal abrogation of the 1950 treaty.

The sparring reconstructed here has unfolded in the intermittent negotiations which have been held since October 1969 at the Vice Foreign Minister level in Beijing, and which have been led on the Soviet side initially by V. V. Kuznetsov and since 1970 by L. F. Ilichev.

Ever since the positions of the two sides were staked out late in 1969, the pattern of the talks has remained a repetitious minuet. At intervals lengthening over the years, but averaging about once a year, the chief Soviet representative has returned to Beijing for a few weeks, evidently primarily to reevaluate the possibility that the Chinese might abandon the demand for a total Soviet pullback from all disputed areas. This has not yet happened.

The Economic Dimension

The other central bilateral issue between the two powers over the years has been the economic relationship. Here neither the record of recent years nor immediate prospects are nearly as bleak as those pertaining to the border question. But despite a fairly steady improvement in Sino-Soviet trade turnover since the nadir of the later 1960s, thus far this has remained a secondary--indeed, a fairly minor--factor in both the foreign trade volume and the internal economic life of both countries. The reasons for this can be summarized as (a) politically-generated constraints deriving from Chinese beliefs about the record of past Soviet economic behavior; and (b) Chinese and Soviet assumptions about their present objective economic interests.

In the first place, in this realm as in others, the future is still heavily mortgaged to the past.

The Legacy of the Withdrawal of the Experts. The first burden the Soviets must overcome is the memory of what happened in 1960, the watershed year in which the central Soviet role in Chinese modernization came to an end and the Sino-Soviet economic relationship began to disintegrate. The Soviets have reason to believe that the lasting impression the Chinese retain from this episode is a peculiar one: one of Soviet treacherousness combined with Soviet infirmity of will.

For many years, the Chinese government has sought to burn into the consciousness of its school children fresh awareness of what it characterizes as the perfidy of Khrushchev's actions in August 1960. At that time, as we know, he abruptly cancelled almost all Soviet technical assistance to China and withdrew some 1,400 Soviet advisers

and experts.³⁴ Whatever the provocation the Chinese--in the Soviet view--may have given Khrushchev for this action, it was a violation of Soviet contractual obligations, and it indeed dealt the Chinese economy a heavy blow whose effects were felt for many years afterward. Even if Chinese leaders do not believe their own suggestions that it was this Soviet action more than bad harvests and the mistakes of the Great Leap Forward that precipitated the depression of the Chinese economy in 1960-1962, they are surely convinced that the Soviets greatly intensified China's difficulties in this period and beyond.

Peking does not discuss, however, the Soviet claim that some three months after Khrushchev's action, toward the close of the first great Sino-Soviet showdown at the November 1960 international Communist conference in Moscow, Mikoyan approached the chief Chinese representative Liu Shaoqi on behalf of the Soviet leadership to raise the question of the Soviet specialists again. The Soviets have publicly asserted--and the Chinese have not denied--that Mikoyan at that time indicated to Liu willingness to send "any number" of Soviet experts back to China, provided they were given what Moscow considered "normal conditions of work."³⁵ As we shall see, this offer was subsequently to be reaffirmed more than once by Khrushchev personally and by Khrushchev's successors, but in the years since 1960 the Chinese were never willing to allow more than a token number of Soviet specialists to return to the PRC.

This initial Soviet reversal was apparently prompted by belated realization that by pulling the experts out, the USSR had deprived itself of the chief remaining instrument through which it might some day hope to restore some leverage or influence on the Chinese leadership and Chinese policy. The Soviets also apparently had some foreboding of the enormity of the consequences, which were to greatly accelerate the process of the separation of the Soviet and Chinese economies and societies. From this time onward, the Chinese have been obsessed with the conviction that they must never again allow the Soviet Union to achieve a position whereby it could use its economic relationship with China for political blackmail.

In retrospect, the Chinese probably remember as humiliating the fright their dependence on the USSR caused them in 1960, when they were evidently very much afraid that the USSR would follow up the withdrawal of the experts by cutting off the export to China of petroleum, for which China was then heavily dependent on the Soviet Union. The precedent of Stalin's economic boycott of Yugoslavia in the late 1940s was undoubtedly much on the Chinese mind at the time. Press reports of the period indicated that rationing and use of substitutes for petroleum were immediately begun in Chinese cities, and presumably crash stockpiling as well. Thereafter, the Chinese seem to have bent their efforts to reduce their petroleum dependence on the USSR as rapidly as possible, and achieved virtual self-sufficiency by 1965.

The Korean War Debts and the Question of Future Loans. The question of allowing financial debts to be incurred to the Soviet Union is similarly embittered by past experience.

For example, on a number of occasions Chinese leaders, including Chou, have complained to visitors rather bitterly about the onerous burden of repaying large credits for Soviet war materiel used by China in the Korean War.³⁶ The Chinese apparently thought of these credits as being in a different category from their other economic and military indebtedness to the Soviet Union, and may possibly have originally understood that they would not be required to pay in full for this Korean war materiel. Soviet penuriousness over this matter was cited by the Chinese as symbolizing the reasons the PRC was determined to clear all its debts with the USSR as rapidly as possible and for all time. This was also accomplished by 1965. Meanwhile, the notion of accepting any new loans or credits from the Soviet Union has seemed to be indefinitely poisoned.

Soviet Economic Courting of Beijing. The net result of these experiences has been a long series of rebuffs to sporadic Soviet efforts to retrieve the lost ground, to return the orientation of the Chinese economy toward Soviet industry and Soviet expertise. Over the years, interspersed between--and sometimes simultaneous with--the periodic Soviet efforts to intimidate the Chinese leadership, Moscow has bombarded Beijing with approach after approach seeking a new start to the economic relationship.

Thus in October 1962, as the Cuban missile crisis developed, Khrushchev vainly asked the Chinese ambassador to open a "clean new page," to return to the relationship "that existed up to 1958."³⁷ The following year, according to Moscow, the Soviets "twice" offered to send economic specialists back to China.³⁸ One occasion was apparently November 29, 1963, when Khrushchev sent a letter to Mao proposing, among other things, a broad program of economic cooperation. He asked for a substantial increase in trade over the next few years. He offered to resume Soviet technical assistance to China--and in particular, to send back Soviet experts to help in the oil and mining industries. He reminded the Chinese of his desire that they reopen negotiations to buy entire Soviet plants. And he proposed that new Sino-Soviet commercial and other ties be woven into the five-year plans of the two countries. No part of this program, the Soviets complained, was accepted.³⁹

In November 1964, soon after Khrushchev had been ousted, his successors held talks with Chou Enlai in Moscow and made among other things what the Soviets have subsequently termed "concrete proposals" for expansion of trade and technological cooperation. These were coupled, however, with what the Soviets apparently regarded as modest proposals for "coordinating the foreign policy activities of the PRC and the USSR." The Soviets professed to be surprised and grieved that these met with "obstinate resistance from the Chinese leaders."⁴⁰ Finally, eight years later, in 1972, the Soviets claim to have advanced through a variety of channels a new series of "concrete proposals" including, among others, renewed suggestions for the resumption of complete-plant deliveries, the signing of a long-term trade agreement, and the organization of cooperation between Soviet and Chinese academies of science. These proposals were similarly alleged to have been "frozen or rejected by Beijing on various pretexts."⁴¹

The Orientation Toward the West and Japan. Against this background, the Soviets appear to have increasingly felt in recent years that a *fait accompli* was being created in the orientation of the Chinese economy, that time was passing them by. In the years 1972-1974, with the first great flourishing of Chou Enlai's preferences

regarding economic policy toward the industrialized capitalist world, the Chinese turned an important corner in a direction opposite to Soviet desires, tying the Chinese economy to a significant degree to Western and Japanese inputs of technology. The Chinese from this point on increasingly linked their economic development to the presence of Japanese and Western specialists in China, to the acceptance of formerly unacceptable mid-term credits to help finance large purchases, and to the allocation of the bulk of their exports to Third World, Japanese and Western markets to pay for their future imports.

All of these trends, of course, received a further strong impetus after the death of Mao in 1976 and after the quick removal of those elements in the Chinese leadership which had been least enthusiastic about this engagement with the economy of the West. The "Four Modernizations" of the late 1970s under Chou's policy heirs have served to magnify each of the lines of foreign trade policy seen in the early 1970s: the massive purchase of plants and equipment from the capitalist world, the acceptance of the presence of more Western and Japanese technicians, and the acceptance of longer-term credits.

On the other hand, the substantial retrenchment from such greatly expanded commitments which began in the spring of 1979 was a natural consequence of the extraordinary overindulgence in foreign purchasing seen in 1977 and 1978, and of belated realization of the limitations upon China's ability to absorb Western technology rapidly. But there is no evidence to date that this pause has in any way altered the central political fact--that the Four Modernizations continued to move China progressively further away from China's past economic orientation toward the Soviet Union, and into a closer relationship with the world economic system in which the USSR is a minor factor.⁴²

The Soviet Sector of Chinese Foreign Trade

Meanwhile, Soviet bilateral trade with China, while increasing substantially in the last decade from the nadir reached in 1970, has remained a relatively small factor in the trade turnover and economic calculations of both parties.⁴³ This was partly because of the

political factors enumerated above: especially the Chinese unwillingness to date to accept any Soviet credits, whether tacit or explicit.⁴⁴ In consequence, the value of annual trade must be kept in rough balance and renegotiated every year, and Soviet annual sales to China thus perforce limited to the negotiated value of those items the Chinese are willing to sell to the USSR and which the Soviets are willing to accept in each twelve-month period.

Moreover, these political constraints, important as they are, are reinforced by increasingly significant considerations of Chinese economic self-interest. Even if all Chinese politically-imposed inhibitions could be disregarded, the Soviets would still be faced by the essential economic problem of finding Soviet goods which will appear to Beijing to be competitive in quality with what the Chinese can now obtain in the West and Japan. The Soviets are here likely to continue to be handicapped by their inferiority to the capitalist industrial states in most areas of high civilian technology.

The Soviets are additionally handicapped by the fact that the Soviet and Chinese economies, although still at vastly different stages of development, have already become somewhat more competitive and less complementary than they once were. For example, whereas in 1963 Khrushchev could offer superior Soviet expertise for the development of the Chinese oil industry, today the Soviets have no such technical superiority over the Chinese in this field. Whereas formerly China was dependent upon the USSR for much of its petroleum, today both countries are oil exporters, and thus in a sense competitors. Similarly, the PRC and the Soviet Union have become two of the world's largest importers of both Western grain and Western technology. The net impression is thus that the objective import and export needs of both countries make the trading relationship with each other necessarily much less important than the parallel relationship with the industrialized capitalist world. Each has appeared to feel that it has had less to obtain from the other than it could get elsewhere.

Finally, it is possible that the Soviets for a long time tended to believe that the Soviet orientation of China's aging heavy industrial base--the fact that this base was composed largely of plants

built with Soviet help in the 1950s--would prove to be an important factor eventually impelling China to improve relations with the USSR.⁴⁵ It is conceivable, as noted below, that such a calculation has had at least a slight basis in fact. By now, however, the capitalist world's portion of modern industry built for the PRC probably exceeds in monetary value the Soviet-supplied portion, and of course, it is also much newer and technologically more advanced. With the passing years, and the accretion of more and more Western and Japanese inputs to the Chinese industrial base, the central significance of the large original Soviet contribution is thus being progressively diluted, although it has by no means yet vanished.

Prospects for the Soviet Economic Connection

These considerations do not mean that the PRC is not likely to seek a considerably further expansion of economic relations with the USSR, if this can be achieved without yielding what China considers unacceptable political concessions to Moscow. Other things being equal, the need to conserve hard currency emphasized in the current Chinese "readjustment" tends to make increased barter trade with the Soviet Union appear more attractive, and the difficulties experienced in assimilating some advanced Western technology, could, in principle, increase the acceptability of some cruder but simpler Soviet manufactures, which might be deemed adequate for Chinese purposes even if not equivalent to the world level.⁴⁶ Tendencies in this direction may be encouraged by the eclecticism and pragmatism visible in the Chinese search for diverse contributions to their revised model of economic development. Some voices have even been heard asking why China should not now draw on Soviet experience as well as that of others.⁴⁷

For a variety of reasons, however, there are likely to be firm limits on Chinese movement in this direction. As already noted, the Chinese have publicly indicated that the planned expansion of foreign trade under the new "readjustment" will continue to be oriented largely toward the West and Japan, facilitated by new, large, hard currency credits.⁴⁸ On economic as well as political grounds, authoritative

spokesmen have attacked the suitability of the Soviet economy as a model for the new, pragmatic China in view of its rigidity and over-centralization,⁴⁹ and have emphasized distortions, dislocations, and shortages deriving from what the Chinese term the Soviet "militarization of the national economy."⁵⁰ The Chinese continue to excoriate Soviet trading practices with weaker trading partners. They depict the USSR as "desperately peddling its long term cooperation programs to the developing countries" so as to exploit them by "selling technologically obsolete machinery and equipment . . . in exchange for major strategic raw materials."⁵¹ They regularly denounce the Soviet economic relationship with Eastern Europe as calculated to strengthen dependence on the Soviet economy,⁵² and Soviet efforts to further the integration of CEMA-state economies as intended to promote "hegemony" in all its aspects, including military and ideological "integration" and unified foreign policies.⁵³

These attitudes are probably genuine because they are reinforced by long Chinese experience, and bespeak a sensitivity about dependence on the Soviet Union which is likely to persist. Accordingly, Beijing is unlikely to change soon its position on those questions--such as the acceptance of Soviet credits--which in the past have been most closely associated in Chinese thinking with Soviet efforts to use political leverage. For this and other reasons, while a continued substantial growth in Sino-Soviet trade turnover is likely over time, it also seems unlikely that the Soviets will be able to transcend a merely supplementary role in Chinese foreign trade for many years. Meanwhile, the Chinese in 1979 appear to have begun to explore the practical limits of economic "normalization" with the Soviet Union, seeking to discover how far such normalization in fact can be pursued without the sacrifice of overriding Chinese political interests. This is part of the more general Chinese exploration of the tolerable limits of "normalization" which we will now consider.

MODERATING SYMBOLS AND SYMPTOMS

Along with the other elements in Sino-Soviet interaction discussed so far, a faintly moderating undercurrent has been detectable in Chinese behavior toward the USSR since Mao's death. From the first months after Mao's disappearance, there have been a variety of published hints of a Chinese view that the extraordinary degree of tension in the bilateral relationship inherited from Mao was an anomaly in the total context of Chinese foreign policy and excessive to the tactical requirements of the ongoing struggle against the USSR. This has been reflected in the very selective reappearance, at long intervals, of symbols suggesting a desire to introduce civility into some aspects of the state-to-state relationship. Although the Chinese quickly rejected a Soviet overture after Mao's death for the resumption of the party-to-party contacts broken since January 1966,⁵⁴ they almost simultaneously revived a formula not used in authoritative Chinese comments for two years, affirming China's willingness to establish or develop relations with "all" countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence.⁵⁵ A year later, in November 1977, it was publicly revealed that the Chinese Foreign Minister had visited the Soviet National Day reception at the Soviet Embassy in Beijing for the first time since 1966, while on the same day, the PRC invited some Soviet sinologists to visit the Chinese Embassy in Moscow. A year further along, Beijing's Sino-Soviet Friendship Association was resuscitated, and sent a greetings message to its Soviet counterpart on the November 1978 Soviet anniversary for the first time in over a decade.⁵⁶

Prior to 1979, however, there was only one substantive issue--and that a secondary matter--on which the new Chinese leadership diverged from Mao's tactics toward the USSR sufficiently to allow significant new movement. On this question--the matter of the passage of Chinese river traffic between the Amur and the Ussuri--a modest agreement was reached in 1977 apparently involving genuine mutual compromise.

The River Navigation Agreement

As Neville Maxwell has indicated, since 1967, apparently as one manifestation of the growth of Sino-Soviet tension during the Cultural Revolution, the USSR had forcibly prevented Chinese boats from using the main channel around Hei Xiazi and adjoining Khabarovsk in order to pass between the two rivers. Instead, the Soviets insisted that the Chinese use the much smaller, shallower Kazakevich channel between Hei Xiazi and China. Later, in 1974, after four years of fruitless border negotiations in which the Chinese claim to Hei Xiazi had proved a major obstacle, the Soviets are said to have offered to allow Chinese traffic to use the main channel around the island if the Chinese would seek permission to do so and in effect acknowledge Soviet sovereignty over the channel and the island. Since this would have surrendered the point on which the Chinese were insisting in the border talks, the Chinese refused.

In the summer of 1977, however, diplomatic exchanges between the two sides apparently took place outside the context of the border negotiations, and produced a compromise river navigation agreement announced in September, which allowed the Chinese once more to use the channel. Maxwell's fairly authoritative account and other press discussions suggested that both sides yielded somewhat: the Chinese agreed to notify Soviet "river traffic authorities" before passing through the channel, while the Soviets are alleged by Maxwell to have acknowledged in the unpublished agreement that such notification would not prejudice the Chinese territorial claim.⁵⁷ Since then, as we have noted, the Chinese have in fact continued to maintain their adamant demand in the border talks for a Soviet preliminary evacuation of Hei Xiazi.

Soviet Doubts and Differences. It should again be stressed, however, that this one minor agreement and the few scattered symbols of civility appeared against a background of vehement ongoing mutual denunciation across a broad spectrum of issues. A month after the November 1977 invitation of the Soviet sinologists to the Chinese Embassy, for example, *Red Flag* published an article describing the new Soviet constitution as something "long and stinking" and as an

instrument to strengthen "the fascist dictatorship" in the USSR.⁵⁸ It is evident that this dual aspect of Chinese behavior soon began to evoke some controversy in Moscow.

An authoritative editorial article in the principal Soviet journal concerned with China policy late in 1977 made it clear to dissenting Soviet sinologists that the official doctrine was that nothing had happened in Beijing to justify a change in Moscow's unrelentingly hostile assessment of the Chinese leadership. The article revealed that "certain discussions" had been going on among "specialists" behind the scenes over the significance of statements made at the Chinese Eleventh Party Congress in August 1977 attacking the extremism practiced by the "Gang of Four." Although the article did not say so, it is likely that some Soviet "specialists" were also impressed by the willingness of the Chinese to compromise on a new river navigation agreement. Nevertheless, the journal insisted, there had been no fundamental change in Maoist policies, particularly in regard to the Soviet Union--instead, only a "prettifying of Maoism," a "repair of Maoism." The need for "unrelenting struggle" against the Chinese regime had therefore not disappeared, but had acquired "even more pressing significance."⁵⁹ This point of view can only have been strengthened by Chairman Hua's public rejection, a few months later, of the February 1978 Soviet proposal for talks on the principles of Sino-Soviet relations.

Nevertheless, a difference of view among Soviets as to prospects for some conciliation of China appears to have persisted, fed by such phenomena as the increasing pragmatism of Chinese economic and social policy, the gradual disappearance of ideological rhetoric from the ongoing Chinese criticism of Soviet policy, and the rehabilitation of Chinese former officials, purged during the Cultural Revolution, who had been associated, under the vastly different circumstances that prevailed fifteen or twenty years earlier, with a more moderate view than Mao's of appropriate tactics toward the USSR.⁶⁰

Divergences in Moscow over the evaluation of these phenomena surfaced once more after the Chinese Third Central Committee Plenum in December 1978, which was a watershed in the evolution of post-Mao

Chinese pragmatism. One Soviet radio commentator and reputed consultant to the Soviet party apparatus, Nikolay Shishlin, then insisted that "complex and meaningful" developments were under way in China. This specialist contended not only that there was a discernible pragmatic trend under way in Chinese domestic policy, but that in the continuing Chinese internal struggle, additional significant issues would be bound to come in for review. Shishlin urged, possibly with polemical intent, that "this point should be taken into account in assessing the present stage of affairs."⁶¹ In an earlier broadcast, he had contended that the question of relations with the USSR was "invisibly present" in the Beijing debates. It is thus conceivable that Shishlin was one of the more optimistic, dissenting "specialists" rebutted by Soviet authorities in the previously-cited journal editorial of a year earlier.

In contrast, the dominant regime view apparently remained the one expressed in a lengthy *Pravda* article at the close of 1978, which saw the recent Chinese plenum as endorsing the "bankrupt dogmas of Maoism" and doubted the existence of prerequisites for "even slow changes for the better" in Chinese foreign policy. It is notable that *Pravda* went out of its way to discount the significance of the rehabilitation of figures who had opposed "the adventuristic domestic and anti-Soviet foreign direction" of China's policy in earlier decades, insisting that this was simply an effort to "weaken the discontent of the masses."⁶²

Reacting to the Chinese Proposals. Against this background, the emergence of Chinese proposals in April 1979 for talks to explore the possibility of "normalizing" relations with the Soviet Union⁶³ seems likely to have exacerbated this subterranean debate in Moscow. The fact that the Chinese appeared to be withdrawing previous preconditions for holding such talks probably encouraged the views of the minority of Soviet China-watchers who felt that forces were stirring in the Chinese Party that might eventually be willing to accept compromises with the USSR more far-reaching than the river navigation agreement.⁶⁴ Soviet subsequent conduct and statements in the spring and summer of 1979 suggested, however, that the most authoritative Soviets remained highly skeptical of this, and of Chinese intentions

generally. In May, *Problems of the Far East* warned that Chinese foreign policy had taken a "sharp rightward shift," that it was "intensifying" the "most reactionary and chauvinist features" of Maoist foreign policy while combining this with "even greater flexibility and even more sophisticated demagoguery." This journal warned--again in polemical accents--that it would be "shortsighted and dangerous" to regard this new Chinese foreign policy "activeness" as merely "a propaganda maneuver." The anonymous authors observed that the question was "still sometimes posed"--by whom, they did not say--as to whether the Soviet Union "has done everything to improve relations between the USSR and the PRC." Answering this question vehemently in the affirmative, the journal called for renewed and more resolute attacks on Maoism and Chinese political practice as the only Soviet path to restoration of meaningful "cooperation" with China.⁶⁵

This pugnacious suspicion of Chinese purposes in the most authoritative Soviet quarters was evidently strengthened by the flow of events in the spring and summer of 1979, and reinforced a Soviet inclination to give no ground on the terms of the negotiations to be held with Beijing. Formal Soviet statements, for example, implied suspicion that the Chinese overtures were tactical expedients deriving primarily from Chinese changing security needs as a result of the new situation in Indochina.⁶⁶ As noted earlier, although the USSR took no action on its own border with China during the Sino-Vietnamese February 1979 hostilities, the Chinese were for the first time forced to weigh the possibility of a military confrontation on two frontiers; and in the aftermath, the necessity to face a hostile military presence on two sides has become a semi-permanent reality for Beijing. Under these circumstances, the PRC might be thought to have acquired a new reason to seek some mechanism which might contrive to reduce tensions with the USSR without sacrificing major substantive positions at issue with the Soviets, including especially the ongoing struggle over Indochina. Such an inclination might have been strengthened by the sobering experience of the PLA in dealing with Vietnam in February, and by the equally sobering realization--as a result of the ongoing re-examination of China's economic tasks and priorities--that military

modernization adequate to the new two-front challenge was going to take a very long time.

This same line of reasoning also clearly reinforced Soviet fears that the Chinese were seeking to solve their problem by using the proposed Sino-Soviet talks to drive a wedge between Moscow and Hanoi. The Soviets were evidently highly defensive on this point, since the Vietnamese were likely to be deeply suspicious of any hint of a possible moderation of Sino-Soviet tensions at the same time that Hanoi-Beijing relations remained exacerbated and Sino-Vietnamese negotiations deadlocked, while the SRV remained fully extended in desperate struggle in Cambodia, and while the Vietnamese remained isolated in their dependence on the USSR.⁶⁷

The Contrasting Goals in the Talks. As the prospective talks drew closer in protracted sparring through an interchange of diplomatic notes, the divergent objectives of the two sides began to emerge.

The Soviets made it clear that they conceived of the talks as primarily intended to prepare a document to record the agreement of the sides on the general principles of a "normalized" relationship, as originally proposed by the USSR in early 1978 and rejected by the Chinese at that time.⁶⁸

The PRC, for its part, was reported by the Western press to have initially implied that some document might be possible, and to have indicated a desire that improved economic, cultural, and scientific relations should emerge from the talks.⁶⁹ This possibility may have seemed to some Soviets to be enhanced by the fact that the Chinese were willing to make one or two isolated, esoteric conciliatory gestures toward the Soviet Union during the period leading up to the talks, one of which the Soviets reciprocated.⁷⁰

Well before the negotiations began, however, the Chinese made it clear that they wished primarily to use the talks as a vehicle to air all their concrete foreign policy grievances against the USSR which are subsumed under the heading of "hegemony," and which we have discussed above.⁷¹ The Chinese no longer required prior Soviet cessation of specific "hegemonic" practices--e.g., the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Mongolia--as a prerequisite for holding such talks, as

Premier Hua had in effect done in rejecting the original Soviet proposal for talks in 1978.⁷² But the Chinese made it clear that they would reiterate such demands at the talks, and their conduct left open the possibility that they would insist in the talks that Soviet foreign policy concessions of this magnitude were a prerequisite for the document the Soviets had in mind.

All Soviet suspicions and skepticism about Chinese intentions were in due course confirmed by the event, when the first round of the Sino-Soviet bilateral talks finally convened in the fall of 1979. It is clear from subsequent assertions of both sides that the USSR indeed pressed for a joint statement of principles for the relationship, and that the Chinese indeed declined to consider this until the Soviets satisfied far-reaching prerequisites, including, in particular, drastic reduction of the Soviet force posture along the Sino-Soviet border and in Mongolia and abandonment of Soviet encouragement and support for Vietnamese actions.⁷³ Since these demands--as both sides well know--are clearly unthinkable to Moscow, the initial round of the bilateral negotiations evidently at once produced an impasse, and ended in November without result. Although the Chinese in the immediate aftermath continued for a time to send the USSR isolated signals of a desire to maintain civility in the bilateral relationship,⁷⁴ the Soviets were nevertheless left with the prospect that any further rounds of the talks on this relationship might well evolve into another indefinitely protracted negotiation, which might proceed sporadically for years, in parallel with the stalemated border talks.

V

THE IMPACT OF AFGHANISTAN

Thus, even before the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at the close of 1979, the USSR faced a substantial likelihood that its hopes for a significant improvement in its bilateral relationship with China would continue to be deferred. Thereafter, the political earthquake evoked throughout the world by this invasion further weakened these hopes. The Chinese, clearly delighted at the widespread perception

of this event as dramatically confirming their allegations of Soviet expansionist ambitions, responded with a torrent of statements exploiting and amplifying the general indignation over Soviet behavior and alarm over the USSR's possible further intentions. While so doing, Beijing seized the occasion to defer indefinitely additional sessions of the Sino-Soviet bilateral negotiations, as inappropriate in the new international context.

In announcing this decision, the PRC went so far as to acknowledge that the Soviet invasion menaced not only "world peace" but "the security of China" as well. This was a significant departure from Chinese reaction to most previous Soviet actions in the Third World, where it has been general Chinese practice to stress the threat to the USSR posed to the interested of others and to play down the adverse consequences for the PRC. It was evident that the appearance of large Soviet forces in what was likely to prove a quasi-permanent combat role on China's western borders had--in addition to all its other effects--heightened the Chinese sense of the Soviet military threat to China. Consequently, the Chinese Foreign Ministry also noted that this Soviet military action had created "new obstacles" for Sino-Soviet normalization,⁷⁵ heaped on what Beijing regarded as the older obstacles created by Soviet military aid to Vietnam and Soviet force dispositions in Mongolia and Siberia.

At the same time, Beijing was of course particularly gratified--and Moscow correspondingly dismayed--at the significant shift in the attitudes toward the Soviet Union shown by the U.S. government and public after this watershed event. One of the most important consequences of this shift was an increased readiness of the United States--demonstrated during and after the January 1980 visit of Defense Secretary Brown to the PRC--to move toward somewhat closer military association with Beijing. Another was the increased propensity of Washington and Beijing to work in parallel to increase the political costs of Soviet behavior in Afghanistan and to maximize the degree of Soviet political isolation. At the outset of the new decade, the aging and ailing Soviet Politburo thus faced the reality of a sharp worsening of its already poor position in the Sino-Soviet-U.S. triangle, and a

heightened possibility that this process might go considerably further in the next few years.

It was unlikely that the Brezhnev leadership, as it privately contemplated this trend, was more inclined than it had been previously to assign major responsibility for unwelcome developments to its own behavior. Characteristically prone to take for granted the legitimacy of its rapidly expanding conception of Soviet geopolitical rights and security needs, and characteristically insensitive to the effects of this attitude on others, the Soviet Union is inclined to attribute adverse reactions to the innate and spontaneous malevolence of particular individuals. In the case of China, Soviet propaganda has made it plain that it assigns this role to Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping, and that it continues to pin its hopes, for better days in its relationship with Beijing, upon Deng's demise or loss of influence.⁷⁶

More broadly, the Soviet leadership is predisposed by its world-view to find comfort in the face of adverse developments in the patient expectation that time will bring a remedy, that history in the long run will adequately compensate all momentary injuries to Soviet interests. Advisers will probably not be lacking who will seek to encourage the leadership to persevere in this view of China. Some Soviet specialists are likely to continue to argue that over the long run, China's economic weakness--and Beijing's pragmatic awareness that it must concentrate on economic development and avoid both war and excessive military investment--must bring China to a more conciliatory posture toward the USSR, and must bring leaders to the fore who will adopt such a posture.⁷⁷ Some will continue to stress, and perhaps to exaggerate, a Chinese trade motive for eventually changing policy toward the Soviet Union. Others may anticipate the possibility of future erosion of Sino-U.S. cooperation against Soviet interests for a variety of reasons: the possible emergence of points of bilateral Sino-U.S. economic friction; the growth of resentment in the Chinese Party against the challenges to social discipline brought by contact with the West; the possible emergence of conflicting Chinese and U.S. attitudes toward specific developments in the Third World; and the enduring possibility of future U.S. vacillation in policy toward China and the Soviet Union.⁷⁸

All this will probably suffice to perpetuate a Soviet readiness, over the long term, to continue to be willing to "normalize" relations with China on the terms already offered: that is, terms which exclude any significant sacrifice of recent (or, indeed, future) Soviet geopolitical gains, and consequently any reduction of Soviet competitive political and military pressures against Chinese interests. In the aftermath of the invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet Union was at pains to make it clear that these terms remained on the table and that the USSR remained eager to detach China, its weaker and regional opponent, from the United States, the primary and global opponent, if this could be done without perceptible cost. Even the most optimistic Soviets will probably concede, however, that recent events have pushed further back in the new decade the moment when China might conceivably accede to such terms.

For Brezhnev and many of his colleagues, however, hopes attached to the long term are for actuarial and medical reasons a matter of increasingly theoretical personal interest. Consumed by the exigencies of the moment, as the Soviet Union struggles to consolidate its new, more advanced position in southwest Asia and to combat the adverse external reaction, Brezhnev is likely to be increasingly pessimistic that he will live to see a *modus vivendi* reached with China. In any case, under the new political circumstances the Soviet leadership is likely to continue to give its primary felt need--to wage pugnacious political battle against U.S. and Chinese accusations--precedence over its unabated long-term desire to neutralize China. So long as the Soviet war in Afghanistan continues--which may be a long time--these needs of the moment are likely to continue to devour the future.

But even if the fighting in Afghanistan should stop, the likelihood of significant improvement of Sino-Soviet bilateral relations within the next few years seems modest at best because of constraining realities. In view of the long distance China and the Soviet Union had traveled since most of the newly-rehabilitated Chinese officials had last held office, and the thousand fronts on which their national interests had become engaged in the interim, evidence was lacking even before the invasion of Afghanistan to show the existence of strong

sentiment in China favoring the major Chinese concessions that would now be required to bridge the gap.

Since the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Chinese elite has been impressed by a growing body of evidence that the Soviet urge to dominate and to expand--politically and militarily--is unassuagable by concessions, and ultimately irreconcilable with Chinese national interests. Recent events have strongly reinforced this impression. Few Chinese of any background seemed likely to be willing to yield those concrete Chinese interests--especially around China's periphery--that have been challenged by the expansion of the Soviet military presence over the last decade. The Soviet seizure of Afghanistan--and the likelihood of a semi-permanent Soviet military presence on the Chinese western border--is likely to exacerbate this Chinese perception of Soviet geopolitical "encirclement" of China, and broaden the political base for enduring Chinese hostility.

FOOTNOTES

1. Here Chinese behavior has mirrored the full cycle completed in Chinese foreign and domestic policy, evoking memories of Chen Yun's heralded visit to the Yugoslav Party Congress in the summer of 1956 and the expressions of interest in the Yugoslav workers' councils which appeared in the Chinese press that fall.

In August 1978, a Yugoslav Economic Research Society was established in China to enable Chinese officials and academics in a variety of organizations to study and translate Yugoslav economic writings and interact with Yugoslav specialists. In January 1980, the first annual convention of this society was held in Kunming. (Guangming Beijing), January 26, 1980; XINHUA, February 1, 1980.)

2. *People's Daily-Red Flag* (Beijing), joint editorial, September 6, 1963. *Mainichi* (Tokyo) of January 26, 1972, quoting statements made by Chinese officials to a visiting Japanese delegation, described this as Soviet demands (a) for a Sino-Soviet military radio system in China with majority control vested in the Soviet Union, and (b) for a combined naval squadron. An article by the Chinese Defense Minister in July 1978 referred explicitly to this "malicious" Khrushchev proposal to "establish a 'joint fleet' and a 'long wave radio station' in China." (Xu Xiangquian, "Heighten Vigilance, Be Ready to Fight," *Red Flag*, No. 8, 1978; XINHUA, July 30, 1978.
3. *People's Daily-Red Flag* (Beijing), joint editorial, September 6, 1963.
4. For analogous reasons, the Chinese regime under Mao sponsored "speak bitterness" campaigns to try to impart to the young a degree of hatred they did not feel for a pre-Communist regime they did not remember.
5. Thus former French Premier Mendes-France in 1972 quoted Chou Enlai as having privately told him that "the USSR wants to put China in a squeeze," with "the northern jaw of the pincers" composed of Soviet growing military forces in Siberia and Mongolia, and the southern jaw composed of what Chou saw as the increasingly close Soviet relationship with India. (*Le Monde*, *Information*, Paris, May 6, 1972.)
6. For a discussion of the Soviet reaction to this change led by Chou, and the emerging Soviet disillusionment with Chou, see H. Gelman, "The Sino-Soviet Conflict in Soviet Eyes," *Toronto Star*, Vol. 63, No. 374, October 1972.

7. This theme was formally launched as authoritative doctrine in Chou Enlai's report to the Tenth Chinese Party Congress (XINHUA, August 31, 1973).
8. Such warnings were conveyed, for example, in the "Statement to the Government of Japan," carried by TASS, June 18, 1975; and by *Pravda*, November 26, 1977.
9. E.g., TASS, March 25, 1979.
10. XINHUA on June 9, 1979, thus cited details published by the Japanese Defense Agency and the Japanese press on artillery and other armaments alleged to have been recently dispatched to Etorofu and Kunashiri, and mocked evasive replies provided by Soviet Ambassador to Japan Polyansky to Japanese press queries on this question.
11. *Peking Review*, December 29, 1978.
12. *People's Daily*, April 19, 1979, thus complained that the Soviets were "trying to blackmail the West . . . to prevent the West from developing economic relations and normal exchanges with China."
13. See, for example, "The Source of Disturbance in Africa," *People's Daily* Commentary, March 1, 1978.
14. This reference to the Soviet "offensive posture" has long been a very common Chinese theme. For particularly broad-ranging Chinese assessments of that world "posture," see the Xu Xiangqian article previously cited (NCNA, 30 July 1978); see also "Soviet Social-Imperialism--Most Dangerous Source of World War," *Peking Review*, July 15, 1977. Both stress what is depicted as a serious threat to Chinese security as well as to that of others.
15. For example, "Social Imperialist Strategy in Asia," *Peking Review*, January 19, 1979.
16. Beijing Radio, May 8, 1979. The Chinese did not generally stress the fact that Afghanistan is a neighbor of China, nor that the Sino-Soviet-Afghan trijunction in fact adjoins the Soviet Pamir tract which has long been one of the areas at issue in the deadlocked Sino-Soviet border dispute. These are obviously also considerations for Beijing, however.
17. Among many other things, the Chinese, whatever their misgivings, had felt obliged to render increasingly public support to Pol Pot in his three years of intransigent behavior on the Vietnamese-Cambodian border; Vietnam had compelled Laos to expel the PRC's military roadbuilders long present in northwest Laos; China had formally renounced the last vestige of economic assistance to the SRV; and an angry Sino-Vietnamese diplomatic confrontation

had taken place over Vietnamese treatment of ethnic Chinese residents of Vietnam, foreshadowing the much broader international repercussions of Vietnamese expulsion of the "boat people" in 1979. It is clear in retrospect from Vietnamese and Chinese 1979 statements that in the second half of 1978, as Vietnam moved still closer to the USSR and prepared to deal with Pol Pot, both China and the SRV also adopted an increasingly assertive posture in skirmishing on the Sino-Vietnamese border.

18. XINHUA on May 1, 1979, noted that "on March 3, *Peking* gleefully announced that 'the balance of forces on the Asian continent has undergone a drastic change' and that 'all these countries [Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea and Afghanistan] have formed the principal factor for peace.'"
19. In his report to the National People's Congress on June 18, 1979, Premier Hua Kuo-feng said that "it is no secret to anyone as to who caused the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations and where the threat along China's border comes from." (XINHUA, 25 June 1979.) (Emphasis added.)
20. In the same NPC report, Hua asserted that "a superpower has been doing its utmost to exert pressure on and split and undermine the non-aligned movement and change its political direction by machinations through one or two of its lackeys." (Ibid.) Chinese propaganda in the spring of 1979 evidences considerable concern about Cuban activities in preparation for the non-aligned summit scheduled for September in Havana, and warned that Cuba would probably "engage in unscrupulous sabotage activities" at the summit on behalf of the Soviet Union. (*People's Daily*, May 18, 1979.) At a UNESCO session in July 1979, according to XINHUA, "the Vietnamese and Cuban observers, at Moscow's beck and call, took the floor one after the other" to attack Western and Chinese positions, and the Chinese representative replied that this was nothing strange, "because they are twin brothers reared by the same superpower to do mischief in the world." (XINHUA, July 14, 1979.) The Chinese have repeatedly referred to Vietnam and Cuba as the "twins of the polar bear," linking Cuban military operations in Africa to Vietnamese actions in Indochina, and have eagerly seized upon Vietnamese acknowledgment of a similarity between the two states. (XINHUA, April 24, 1979.)
21. The Chinese took particular note of the fact that when "on April 20, 1979 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet . . . ratified the Soviet-Afghan treaty . . . the Soviet leaders jumped at the chance to declare that the 'creation of an effective system of collective security in Asia . . . has become of particular importance lately.'" XINHUA suggested that the Soviets had become more active in trying "to breathe life into a particularly dead scheme" in part because of recent events in Southeast Asia. (XINHUA, May 1, 1979.) Prior to the recent fighting, in the view

of *People's Daily*, the USSR had "vainly attempted to push Vietnam as a Trojan Horse into ASEAN in an attempt to drag the ASEAN countries into a so-called 'Asian security system'" (*People's Daily*, June 22, 1979.) More recently, according to statements by Vice Premier Li Xiannian to Japanese journalists, Vietnam's military actions had been designed to make the Indochinese Federation a reality, and this federation in turn "is part of the Asian security system that the USSR is attempting to establish." (*Yomiuri Shimbun* (Tokyo), March 5, 1979.)

22. Beijing radio on May 23, 1979, reminded its listeners that "when the guns roared on the border between China and Vietnam, Soviet warships became active and caused trouble in the Beibu Gulf to support Vietnam, the small hegemonist." This broadcast demanded that "more attention" be paid "to the fact that the Soviet Union and Vietnam are now preparing public opinion to accept the establishment of permanent Soviet military bases in Vietnam." The ultimate Soviet purpose, said the broadcast, was "to counter the United States, threaten Japan, control Southeast Asia and encircle China." Many Chinese articles in the spring of 1979 similarly rehearsed Western and Japanese press reports about Soviet naval and air use of facilities at Cam Ranh Bay and Danang, as well as accounts of the arrival of the Soviet aircraft carrier *Minsk* in the Far East at the end of its long, well-publicized journey from the Mediterranean.
23. *Investiya*, May 16, 1974, and *Pravda*, April 1, 1978, contain the most elaborate statements of this Soviet viewpoint and the Soviet version of the facts reviewed below.
24. *Peking Review*, March 10, 1978.
25. The Chinese Foreign Ministry Statement of October 8, 1969 (XINHUA, October 8, 1969). This remains the most elaborate and authoritative statement of the Chinese position.
26. Ibid.
27. The Chinese have for a decade claimed that at the Chou-Kosygin meeting in Beijing on September 11, 1969, Kosygin agreed to the Chinese demand for a preliminary agreement on maintaining the status quo and mutual withdrawal from all disputed areas, prior to efforts to settle upon an agreed border. The Soviets have with equal vigor denied that Kosygin made any such oral stipulation.
28. Neville Maxwell, "Why the Russians Lifted the Blockade at Bear Island," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1978.

29. *Pravda* (Moscow), August 2, 1970. Against this background, a further message about the Soviet attitude toward Hei Xiazhi was conveyed by General Secretary Brezhnev's visit to Khabarovsk in April 1978, where he saw a military parade and delivered a speech emphasizing the need for strict vigilance. (*New York Times*, April 10, 1978) The Chinese Defense Minister reacted to this by writing that Brezhnev had personally sneaked into Siberia and the Soviet Far East to encourage the Soviet troops and issue war cries." (Xu Xiangquian, op. cit.)
30. The question of navigation around Hei Xiazhi is another matter. As we shall see, after years of stalemate there has been a compromise reached on this question without prejudice to the issue of sovereignty. We shall discuss the possible implications of this agreement below.
31. *Ispravitsya*, May 16, 1974.
32. "Report to the Fourth National People's Congress," XINHUA, January 13, 1975.
33. *Ispravitsya*, May 16, 1974.
34. Letter of CCP to CPSU, February 29, 1964, *People's Daily*, May 9, 1964.
35. *Ispravitsya*, May 21, 1964.
36. The February 27, 1964, letter from the Chinese to the Soviet Party said that "for many years we have been paying the principal and interest on these Soviet loans, which account for a considerable part of our yearly exports to the Soviet Union." (*Seven Letters Exchanged Between the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1964, p. 26., hereafter, *Seven Letters* . . .) During the Cultural Revolution a Red Guard-published chronology of the Sino-Soviet dispute apparently drawn from official sources alleged that Khrushchev in the summer of 1960, in addition to withdrawing the experts, had "called on China to repay all loans plus interest incurred during the Korean War." "Chronicle of Events in the Soviet Revisionist Campaign Against China," Hong Kong Consulate General, *Foreign Background*, No. 850, April 3, 1968. If this allegation has any validity, it is possible that some Chinese payments had previously been deferred. In 1975, Chou Enlai was reported to have told a senior Japanese visitor that Chinese economic progress had been seriously hampered by a Soviet "demand" for payment of 560 million new rubles, of which 62 percent was for Korean war expenses, 26 percent for economic aid, and 12 percent for plants and harbor facilities in Port Arthur. (*Mainichi Daily News*, Tokyo, February 6, 1975.)

37. "Marxism-Leninism, the Basis of the Unity of the Communist Movement," *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 15, October 1963.
38. *Investiya*, May 21, 1964.
39. See this Soviet letter, the Chinese reply of February 29, 1964, and the Soviet response of March 7, 1974, in *Soviet Letters . . .* (op. cit.).
40. *New York Times*, March 24, 1966.
41. *Investiya*, May 16, 1974.
42. This was evident, for example, in Vice Premier Yu Quili's report to the National People's Congress on the 1979 economic plan, which called for \$12 billion in Chinese exports and \$15 billion in imports, a one-fifth increase in exports and two-fifths increase in imports over 1978. Yu made it clear that Western capital equipment would continue to play an important part in Chinese modernization, despite the adjustments to long-term economic plans. This "major policy decision" for the "energetic expansion of foreign trade" was coupled with a resolve to work to expand hard currency earnings "by every possible means." (XINHUA, June 28, 1979.)
43. Total Sino-Soviet exports and imports in recent years have been about two percent of the value of Chinese total foreign trade, and a smaller portion of Soviet foreign trade. Richard E. Batsavage and John L. Davie, "China's International Trade and Finance," Figures 2 and 3, in *China's Economy Post-Mao*, Vol. 1, U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee compendium, Washington, D.C., 1978, pp. 715-716.
44. In addition, there is no evidence that the Soviets have in the last few years renewed any earlier proposals about credits. Their present willingness to do so is uncertain.
45. A Hungarian writer observed in 1971, on the eve of the first leap in Chinese industrial purchases from the West and Japan, that "the 400 important industrial installations built with the aid of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries . . . are becoming obsolete, and there has been no important investment at the national level in recent years. (*Magyarorszag* (Budapest), July 25, 1971.)
46. *People's Daily* on May 8, 1979, stated that "even advanced technology is relative; it changes with changing circumstances. We regard as advanced those things which conform to China's specific conditions, can solve problems and achieve economic results. We cannot afford to recklessly import advanced technology while disregarding actual conditions Some enterprises are producing up-to-date products with machinery made in the 1940s or 1950s. This spirit is worth promoting."

47. A pro-Beijing publication in Hong Kong, possibly reflecting such attitudes in the PRC, urged China to seek "to absorb some experience helpful to the four modernizations" from the Soviet Union, arguing that "we can draw from and exploit experiences regardless of whether they are of those of our friends or our enemies." (*Wing Ming* (Hong Kong), May 1, 1979.)
48. At the National People's Congress session in June 1979, Vice Minister of the State Planning Commission Gu Ming, discussing the difference between the present "readjustment" and what had happened in 1962, observed that "at that time the Soviet Union perfidiously withdrew its experts, seriously damaging our national economy. Now the international situation is extremely favorable to us, because we implemented the line in foreign affairs formulated by Chairman Mao and Premier Zhou." (Beijing Radio, June 20, 1979.) The line in question, as earlier noted, was the process of multiplication of economic and other ties to the non-Soviet world.
49. For example, Sun Yefang, the leading Soviet-trained economist purged during the Cultural Revolution and since rehabilitated took this position in an article in the June 1979 issue of *Red Flag*. He blamed the Soviet system for stifling the spread of technological innovation, and called for the more rapid replacement of the obsolete equipment imported in the past from the USSR. Other Chinese comment has cited Hungary, and to a lesser extent Yugoslavia, as more appropriate economic examples for China.
50. XINHUA commentary, "Why Is the Soviet Union Short of Steel?," April 21, 1979.
51. XINHUA commentary, "Why Does the Soviet Union Want Long Term Cooperation With the Developing Countries?," Beijing Radio, May 24, 1979.
52. XINHUA commentary on May 7, 1979, examined in some detail the constriction of the growth rates of five East European states as the result of the freeze in the level of Soviet petroleum exports to Eastern Europe. *People's Daily* of May 27, 1979, discussed what is depicted as the depressing effects on the manpower-short CEMA states of arrangements to send sizeable numbers of workers to projects in the Soviet Union.
53. *People's Daily*, April 24, 1979.
54. *New York Times*, September 15, 1976.
55. This formula was used in the Chinese representative's October UN address and in a November PRC announcement on foreign affairs. (XINHUA, October 5, 1976, and November 2, 1976.)

56. XINHUA, November 6, 1978.
57. Maxwell, op. cit. XINHUA on October 6 announced the existence of a new river navigation agreement, and a Chinese official later described this as the result of an "understanding" reached between the two Foreign Ministers. (*Reuters*, December 12, 1977; *The Times* (London), December 24, 1977.)
58. *Red Flag* (Beijing), December 5, 1977.
59. "The New Stage in the Evolution of Beijing's Anti-Socialist Policy and the Tasks of the Struggle Against Maoism," *Problems of the Far East*, No. 4 (24), 1977. This journal includes on its editorial board such major figures in Soviet-China policy as Rakhmanin and Ul'yanovsky of the Central Committee apparatus, Kapitsa of the Foreign Ministry, and Sladkovsky and Tikhvinsky of the academic world. Its collective weight is therefore important.
60. One such recently rehabilitated figure, Wang Jiaxiang--now deceased--was in fact a former Ambassador to the USSR and is of symbolic importance for having put forward a proposal in 1962 which specifically envisioned, among other things, conciliation of the USSR. The Chinese press article rehabilitating Wang in fact alluded to this proposal and defended Wang's right to have made it (but not the content of the proposal). (Zhu Zhongli, "Firmly Holding Premier Zhou's Concern for Comrad Wang Jiaxiang," *Gongren Ribao* (Beijing), April 5, 1979.)
61. Moscow Radio, January 8, 1979. See also, Foreign Broadcast Information Service *Trends in Communist Media* (National Technical Information Service, U.S. Department of Commerce), January 17, 1979, pp. 3-4.
62. *Pravda*, December 28, 1978.
63. These proposals accompanied the Chinese rendering of formal notice to the Soviets of abrogation of the long-dormant Sino-Soviet friendship treaty of 1950. (XINHUA, April 3, 1979.) Before and after the signing of the Sino-Japanese Friendship Treaty, Deng Xiaoping had indicated to Japanese newsmen that the Sino-Soviet treaty--which singles out Japan as a prospective antagonist--would be abrogated. (E.g., *Kyodo* (Tokyo) September 6, 1978.)
64. This view is likely to have also been encouraged by the appearance of the earlier-mentioned article in a Hong Kong newspaper, which explicitly urged conciliation of Moscow. (*Cheng Ming* (Hong Kong), May 1, 1979.)

65. "Policy Line Hostile to Peace and Socialism," *Problems of the Far East*, No. 2, 1979, pp. 13-23. This call for more resolute struggle against the Chinese leadership was indeed reflected in some novel Soviet steps taken in the months that followed. In the spring of 1979, the regime arranged for publication in the West of a highly inflammatory book, signed by its well-known agent Victor Louis, depicting China's eventual political and geographical disintegration. (Victor Louis, *The Coming Collapse of the Chinese Empire*, Times Books, New York, 1979.) In the same period, a series of clandestine, unattributed radio broadcasts were initiated, evidently by the Soviet Union, attacking Deng Xiaoping and other Chinese leaders in particularly uninhibited fashion.
66. *Pravda* of July 11, 1979, asked whether the Chinese were seeking merely "talk about talks," partly with a view to attempting to "bring pressure on Vietnam."
67. Hanoi repeatedly complained about the Chinese use of "anti-hegemonism" in its proposals in the Sino-Vietnamese talks, "in order to deceive the world community." (Hanoi Radio, May 19, 1979.) The Soviets have complained that the proposition of "opposition to hegemonism . . . means, in regard to Vietnam, the SRV's renunciation of . . . friendship and cooperation with the USSR."
68. Soviet Foreign Ministry Note, TASS, June 5, 1979.
69. AFP, May 9, 1979.
70. Moscow Radio on June 5, 1979, broadcast in Chinese a recording of a nonpolemical statement prepared for Soviet radio by the Chinese delegate to an international coal-dressing conference being held in the Soviet Union. Three days later, *Pravda* published a two-paragraph nonpolemical account of an antipollution conference just held in Beijing, apparently to reciprocate for preparation of the recording. Later, as the Sino-Soviet negotiations were beginning, a Japanese report alleged that China had invited the Soviets to participate in a women's volleyball meet in 1980. (Kyodo news service (Tokyo), September 29, 1979.)
71. In July, Vice Foreign Minister Han Nianlong was quoted by a Japanese interviewer as stating that "during the talks, there is a strong possibility China will bring up the issue of a Soviet military withdrawal from Mongolia." (*Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), July 15, 1979.) In August, Vice Premier Geng Biao was quoted in a similar interview as asserting that so long as the Soviet Union did not change its attitude toward the "hegemony" issue, the result of the talks would be "obvious." (*Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), August 12, 1979.) In late September, after the talks had started, Vice Premier Gu Mu, when questioned at a press conference about the economic aspects of the

negotiations, stated that "trade between the Soviet Union and China has been going on for years, but the main question [in the talks] is not trade The basic problem is whether the Soviet Government will change its hegemonistic and expansionist activities in the world." (AFP (Hong Kong), September 28, 1979.)

Vice Premier Li Xiannian earlier had stated that China had "no intention of changing even slightly its basic stance on international issues" in talking to the Soviets (*Kyodo* (Tokyo), June 17, 1979). Deng Xiaoping had said he was pessimistic about improving relations with Moscow because the Soviets were "unlikely to give up their hegemonism and social imperialism." (*Kyodo*, May 16, 1979.) PLA Deputy Chief of Staff Wu Xiquan told Japanese newsmen in July that "China will not appease but will frontally oppose the world hegemonism of the Soviet Union." (*Mainichi Shimbun* (Tokyo), July 15, 1979.)

72. For the Hua statement, see *Peking Review*, March 10, 1978. The April 1979 Chinese proposal for bilateral talks, put forward together with notice of abrogation of the 1950 treaty, did not raise the issue of withdrawal from Mongolia, as Hua had done. (NCNA, April 3, 1979.)

73. A month later the talks began, Deng Xiaoping was asked by a Japanese interviewer if he did not think it would be better, "for the sake of the negotiations, first to sign a cultural exchange agreement, a technical agreement, and documents concerning state relations, and then to negotiate patiently on other difficult questions?" Deng replied that "the Soviet side appears to think so; the Soviet Union tries to deceive world opinion by making the negotiations look as if they are progressing to a certain extent without resolving basic questions." But, added Deng, without resolving basic questions, the negotiations "are of no value at all." He went on to observe that the 1950 Sino-Soviet treaty had not been of much use, and to suggest that any new treaty with the USSR could be useful only after "obstacles between the two countries are truly removed." (*Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), October 19, 1979.) The implication of Deng's remarks was that all agreements and documents would have to wait upon the resolution of the "basic" issues China was raising in the talks. That those issues centered on Chinese demands regarding specific Soviet "hegemonistic" practices--such as the stationing of troops in Mongolia--was plainly indicated by the Han, Geng, and Gu statements cited above.

After the talks were suspended, these Chinese conditions were specifically and publicly confirmed. See, for example, the *Spiegel* interview with *People's Daily* correspondent Tan Wenrui (*Der Spiegel*, Hamburg, February 18, 1980).

74. Beijing Radio on December 31, 1979, broadcast, in Russian, New Year's greetings to the Soviet "people" from a Chinese engineering geologist who had participated in an international geological

symposium held at Tbilisi in September 1979. This Chinese was quoted as saying that China should use Soviet geological experience, cited Soviet participants in the symposium as expressing eagerness to journey to China, and asserted that "Chinese and Soviet colleagues will have the opportunity to meet more often to exchange experience."

75. *Beijing Review*, No. 4, 1980 (January 28, 1980).
76. Soviet attacks on Deng have been particularly uninhibited in the unattributed "Ba Yi" clandestine radio broadcasts begun in Mandarin in early 1979 (see footnote 65). But such attacks have also been vigorously present in Moscow Radio Peace and Progress broadcasts, which are attributed to the Soviet Union but purport to be unofficial. A "Peace and Progress" broadcast of May 8, 1979, for example, concluded with the assertion that "China's real patriots condemn the Deng Xiaoping clique and its criminal policy."
77. This point of view has been expressed, for example, by the *Investiya* political commentator Aleksandr Bovin, who told a Japanese interviewer in the spring of 1979 that normalization of Sino-Soviet relations might take place "in the latter half of the 1980s," since by then the Chinese leaders would "come to realize" that "it is against China's national interests to have a powerful enemy across its long border," and that it is in China's "genuine interests . . . to normalize relations with the Soviet Union, a powerful neighbor." (*Mainichi Shimbun* (Tokyo), April 16, 1979.)
78. V. B. Lukin of the USA Institute, for example, has continued to stress what he professes to consider the "serious latent contradictions" between U.S. and Chinese interests. ("Washington-Beijing: 'Quasi-Allies?'. "Moscow, SShA: *Ekonomika, Politika, Ideologiya*, No. 12, 1979.)

